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STAR DUST

BY

Jeannette Fraser Henshall

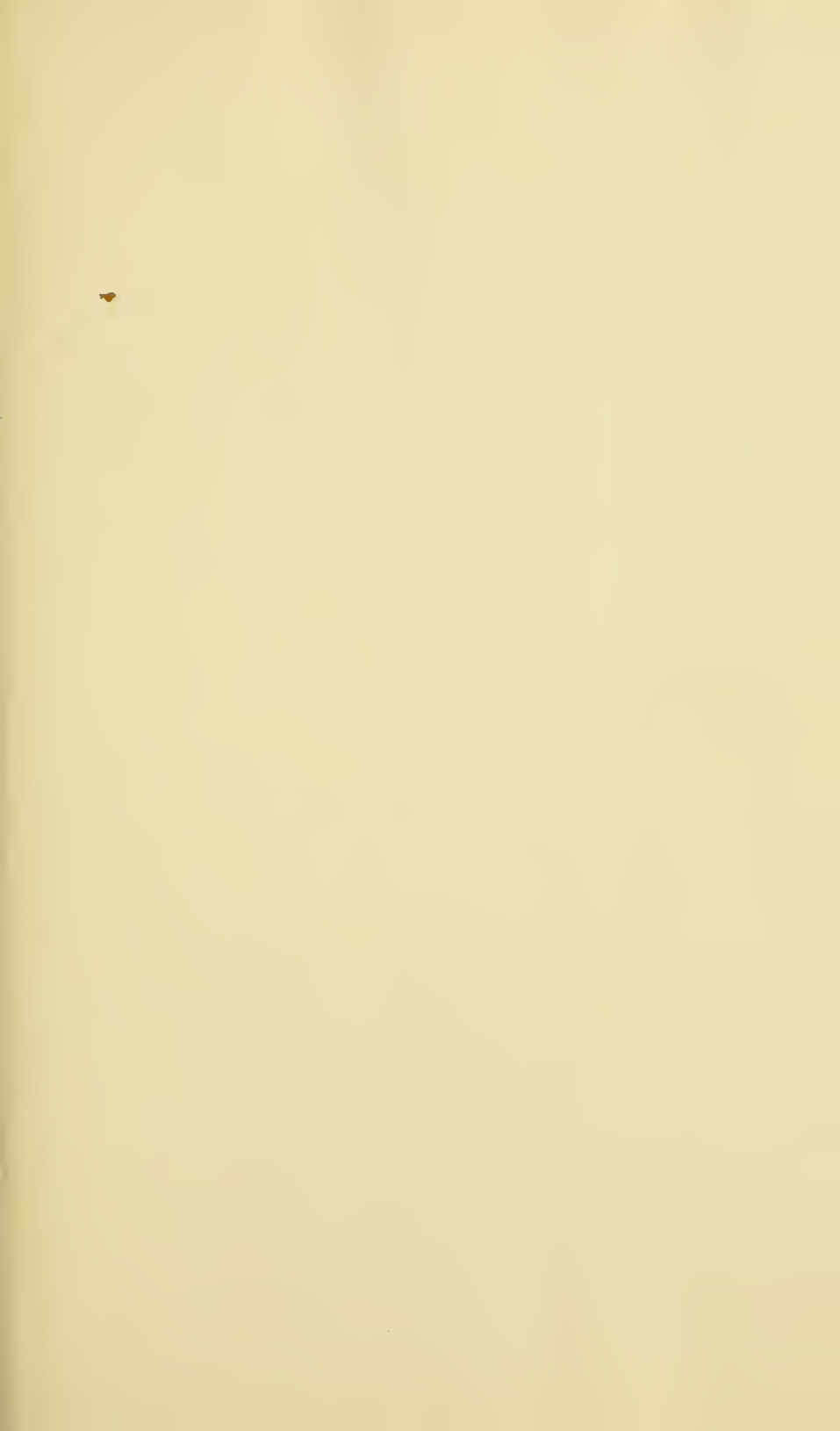


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JEANNETTE FRASER HENSHALL

STAR DUST

BY

Jeannette Fraser Henshall

Dedicated to

Helena Hurry



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STARDUST

There's a little place in dreamland,
Where I dare not linger long;
But I often wander by it,
While the daylight slips along.
But whene'er I touch it's border,
And admire it's soft blue skies,
There's a little spright of mischief
Throws the stardust in my eyes.

So I dally through the morning,
And I ponder o'er my tea,
Comparing skyline colors,
With the matchless tints at sea.
Then I turn to tasks unfinished,
Then with swiftness of surprise,
I glimpse the little mischief
Throwing stardust in my eyes.

I'm a sad and vexing problem
To my pardner and my friend,
For they jolt me out of cloudland
To the busy world of men.
But I find a well of pleasure
In dreamland's sunny skies,
And I love the little mischief
Who throws stardust in my eyes.

LIFE

A little bit of sorrow
And a little bit of song,
Sometimes the way is very brief,
Sometimes it seems too long.

A little bit of trouble,
Vague wonderings and fears,
A little bit of rapture,
Mixed up with smiles and tears.

Sometimes the way is stony
And the thorns are uppermost,
But it's always worth the living,
No matter what the cost.

FATE THE SPINNER

A solitary spinner,
Sat in the weaving room
Charged by the master craftsman
With the fabric in the loom.
She worked all day at the weaving,
'Til the hour was growing late,
Then she left the task unfinished
And me to a tangled fate.

Perhaps some day the spinner
Who unwittingly tangled my doom
With a stricken heart, will remember
The fabric, the web and the loom.
She'll gather the threads together,
All golden and silver spun,
Tie all the ends with a rainbow
And bands from the moonbeams young.

She'll weave in a little rapture,
Discard all the tears and pain,
Give me a crown for crosses,
Repair my loss with gain.
Then when the master craftsman
Ponders the loom a-while,
He'll give me a smile of magic
To win me the friends worth while.

DESTINY

Tempestuous skies,
Pale clouds racing by,
A wild, a windy day,
A band of mist,
By sunbeams kissed,
And you, dear, far away.

And O, believe,
The purple eve,
Brings visions of your face.
My memory
But tortures me
With things that ne'er take place.

TO "POP"

When dad put on his coat and hat,
And said good-bye to me,
He looked so sad, you'd almost think
'Twas for eternity.
He looked so sorrowful and blue
When the depot street car came,
And from the rear end platform
He waved good-bye again.

Then we went home, unlocked the door,
And say, the atmosphere
Just reeked of his tobacco smoke,
But yet the house was drear.
We couldn't eat, just nibbled things,
Some cookies and a bun;
We tried to read, but strange to say,
The magazines were bum.

Ma couldn't sleep, but just lay down,
With all the lights turned on;
The rest of us just wondered
Where our headaches all came from.
When we awoke, our little flat
Was cold as all outdoors.
The fire was out, someone forgot
To do the evening chores.

Then someone wished to know the time,
We missed the old tick-tock,
And red with shame my mother said,
She didn't wind the clock.
They often say "what's home
Without a mother's face?"
But there are lots of daddies, too,
Great factors in their place.

MY SWEETHEART'S NAME

So often at the mention of my sweetheart's name,
Tho' strangers cannot guess my inmost tho't,
I feel at times this cheek of mine grow pale,
Or in a sudden panic crimson hot.

When careless hands from some stray page had cut
His likeness and a record of his fame,
The hot tears pushed themselves a-down my cheeks,
And jeweled every letter of that name.

'Tis well enough when duties claim my mind,
But how I love eve's witching hours that trace
Among the dancing shadows of my walls
Each dear, familiar feature of his face.

The lips that never have, and never will touch mine,
Those eyes so deeply tender—but this pen
Could not do justice to so sweet a name,
A wife could wish to wear no lovelier gem.

In sundrift paths of memory I walk,
I know 'tis folly and it gives me needless pain,
Yet I'm prizing every little sweet reminder,
That bids me speak in dreams my sweetheart's name.

GRIEF

Oh dey say yo' safe f'um ha'm
But dey tuk you f'um my a'm—
Dey buried you beneath the col' and sno'.
My ole hea't nea'ly broke
And the tea's nigh mak' me choke,
Kaze, I loved ma baby so.

And I'se dreamin' in de night
'Et I'se huggin' of yo' tight,
And a-kissen' of yo' wa'm, sweet baby face.
Den, I wakes up in de gloom,
And by de glimmer f'um de moon,
I sees, yo' empty cradle in it's place.

Oh, I sho'ly think et God
Hid hissef behind a cloud,
When he let dem take my lamikin a-way.
He sho'ly done forgot,
Poor ole mammy's lonely lot,
And de emptiness in dis ole hea't today.

TO A CENSOR

There's something of a tonic
In your censor just like wine,
And you'll find no yellow fabric
In this makeup stuff of mine.
I may not be a soldier,
Or commander of a fleet,
But I'm one who loves a battle
And I'll never know defeat.

You may think you've flayed and silenced
One more nuisance, with your pen,
But, believe me, lovely lady,
I will just come back again.
There's a something still more bitter
Than the sweetest thing is sweet;
We who court success, just drink it,
But never know defeat.

Censor bitter! well just maybe,
For everybody knows
That a thorn is constant comrade
To the sweetest flower that grows.
So, I'll take your written censor,
Call it by a name more sweet,
Line up once again for action,
But never know defeat.

TO A ROSE

Wine red in your heart,
Each petal apart,
Looking drunk, with your own sweet perfume.
Summers one queen,
On bow'd stem of green,
Beautiful spirit of June.

Remembrance brings near
Past days that were dear,
Amethyst evenings, and summer night moons.
Strange tho'ts now obsess me
As I stoop to caress thee,
And drink, of your unmatched perfume.

THE LITTLE BROWN HOUSE AT THE CROSSROADS

The little brown house at the crossroads
Looks out from its cunning brown frame,
Thro' the drift of the years' and life's changes,
Its attraction and charm is the same.
Wasn't it sweet in the days of old,
To seek its sheltering tender fold,
Stirring the embers, when it was cold,
In the little brown house at the crossroads.

The dear little house at the crossroads,
Dressed winsome in flower and vine,
Coming from out of the dreams I love,
To capture this heart of mine.
I can see it yet, in the dripping rain,
'Most shouting a welcome the nearer I came,
Down the gleaming pathway of mist and rain,
To the little brown house at the crossroads.

And God; if ever I do get to heaven,
And there's houses with cunning brown frames,
Have one ready for me at the crossroads,
And write, just above it, my name.
Oh! It will be sweet when the door's open wide,
And folks that I love round the old chimneyside,
Are stirring its embers; but only for pride,
Of the little brown house at the crossroads.

ALONE

Quiet often in his vague, elusive plan,
The Master measures off a space for man
In which no angel ever walks or smiles
Encouragement, along life's weary miles.
Their pristine beauty he keeps safe at home,
So in his direst plight, man seems alone.

When He recalled from us His blessed Son,
Our eternal testing work had just begun,
We've had since then no heavenly vision bright,
Seemed God in silent scorn turned off the light,
So man though devious ways may search alone
To find the path that leads him safely home.

GOOD-BYE

Perhaps a friend is taking
A journey far away;
It may be for a fortnight,
Or only for a day.
You press their hand in parting,
While you smother back a sigh,
And the heart of you is calling,
Good-bye, good-bye.

The love we worhsip blindly
With a pure, sweet, tender, tho't,
Then pleading; tho' our lips be dumb,
But love's voice answers not.
Then stunned thro' years of silent grief—
We wander aimless by,
And suffer; every time we hear,
Good-bye, good-bye.

It may be death has taken
A loved one by the hand,
And spirit-like has led them
Into the silent land.
We struggle with our sense of grief,
And like lost children cry
Across a new-made grave today,
Good-bye, good-bye, good-bye.

TO BEULAH

I never knew the house could talk
In such a pensive way,
That piano stools and vacant chairs
Could find so much to say.

Your silent little bedroom
And books all seem inclined
To shout at me their hunger
For that little girl of mine.

How could I know that ribbon bows
Could voice a grief today,
And that I'd learn to know the things
An empty chair could say.

I'm glad 'tis but a shadow
That will pass like summer rain,
And tomorrow evening truly
I will have you back again.

OLD YEAR, GOOD-BYE TO YOU

I have always loved old poems,
Old melodies, old towers,
And I adore old homesteads,
Old laces and old flowers.
I love the fairy magic
That makes my heart beat true,
And yearn for old-time comrades,
But, old year, I love you, too.

I'm sad to see you going,
You've meant so much to me—
Of sorrows, and I faced them
With eyes too dimmed to see.
You've given me full measure—
Of gloom, and such a few—
Of smiles and reassurance,
But, old year, I love you, too.

You've given me new crosses,
Placed them heavy on my heart,
And I bore them sometimes flinching,
Knowing this to be my part.
And I can't forget, old comrade,
All the tides we've drifted through,
So here's my hand in parting,
Old year, good-bye to you.

INSTABILITY

I called thee friend in former days,
But one thing I deplore
For reasons which I may not name,
I call thee friend no more.
With thee I shared each joy, each woe,
In that remote, sweet time;
Thy being held a vibrant chord,
A-tuned in pitch with mine.

We mused alike, each mutual tho't
Seemed blended into one;
But lo, the strings we loved so much
Are broken and unstrung.
O life, your shallowness oft gives
One's tho'ts a bitter trend,
We would there were no theme named love
And no such word as friend.

A PRAYER

Lord, this barren life of storm and stress
Is heavy with its weight of loneliness.
If this is what I'm pleased to call your best,
Then let me go.

And God, you've deemed me worthless of a place,
And let me stagger thro' dim, endless space,
Tho' I would run you have denied the race,
So let me go.

And out of all the pain and bitter loss,
The gall, the wormwood and dull dross,
I bear each day a new thorned crown and cross,
Oh let me go.

And if my earnest plea you have denied—
My petition you as worthless put aside.
Oh, give me you're sweet peace inside,
If I must stay.

And if, dear Lord, you bid me longer stay,
Oh keep my feet within the narrow way,
And cheer me on the long, dark lonely day,
If I must stay.

And God, I kindly would that you unroll
The cold, grey mists all wrapped about my soul,
And though I'm blind you lead me to the goal,
If I must stay.

A GARLAND FOR GLORY

You bewilder the world with your section of blue,
In my dreams you unfurl your bright stars to my view.
Crimson bars daring us all to be true,
To live, and endeavor, and fight all for you
Beloved, starry banner of glory.

May your colors and stars know no sorrow or shame,
Though the blood of our children must flow once again.
May your standard be high and untrammelled your fame,
'Till God, the great Master, cries halt in the game—
Victorious banner of glory.

THE GOLDENROD

God was mixing up the colors
That He wanted in the sky.
Of blue He had a-plenty
In His storehouse up on high.
With a lavish hand He spread it
Across the atmosphere,
And the drippings from His brushes,
Fell about the woodland here.
Then the rain came down in April,
Made each paint drop dewy wet;
Then they bloomed into that fragrant
Little flower, the violet.

Then he searched His rarest gardens
Where each gorgeous color grows,
That's why we love the crimson paint
He put into the rose.
When He lifted up the curtain
From the canvas in the west,
It was flooded with the color
All America loves best.
For the gold He held too sacred
For an ordinary job,
So He crowded all its glory
Into the goldenrod.

A LOVE LETTER

Without being conscious I'm speaking,
I walk, yet ne'er notice the place;
In crowds I'm so lonesome, yet seeing
Each feature of your loving face.
And I'm longing to break each sweet memory
With caresses so loving and true,
But I'm hundreds of leagues in the distance,
And constantly dreaming of you.

I blindly perform every duty,
But I long to get out and alone,
When I'm yearning to have you embrace me,
To kiss your sweet lips with my own.
I'm consumed with the sweet, living torture,
And the rapture, half longing, half pain,
And the picture of our love and meeting,
Nevermore to be parted again.

A TOAST

Why should we fear
Grim death's cold bier
And tremble at the same?
It's in the plan
For mortal man;
Why shouldn't we be game?

Here's to the maize
Of golden days,
Of mirth, and joy, and laughter.
So let's forget
The grime, the sweat,
Also, what's coming after.

It's long been said
When one is dead,
It's for a long, long time.
Hearts pulseless lie,
Emotions die,
Here's to your loves and mine.

MY DAUGHTER

She's my sorrow, my laughter,
My gloom and my joy;
And, having no sons,
She's my girl and my boy.

She's my pest and my pleasure,
My crown and my cross;
She's down in life's ledger
As profit and loss.

She's resplendant with youth,
From her head to her toes;
She's as good as the best,
I'm her mother who knows.

She's a trial, God bless her,
But what is much worse,
She's an enemy, both
To my pantry and purse.

She's a tease and a torment,
Faults, blunders and all;
God lead, guide and save her,
Lest worse should befall.

THE VAGABOND

O spring, why do you torture me,
With such a restless mind?
You've made a vagabond of me,
You're far from being kind.

I can think of naught but mating birds,
And lovers by the pair;
You sing, you dance, you call, you tease,
You fill me with despair.

A thousand voices call me,
I'm in a roving mood.
I'm reckless to a sad degree,
And far from feeling good.

O spring, see what you've done to me;
I'm wild to be away;
I drive folks to distraction
With the things I do and say.

I want to walk in brown, bare woods,
Among the stirring things,
And startle early birds and see
New wonders in the spring.

My mind is absent from me,
My soul has taken wing;
My brain is dancing crazy
With the tunes I want to sing.

Sometimes I'm wild with pleasure,
In a moment I am sad;
If God created all these moods
I wish He never had.

HAPPINESS

Its cost is never measured
Its truth no tutors teach,
Forever at our elbows,
Yet just beyond our reach.

FROM ONE WOMAN TO ANOTHER

And when you came,
Rough shod, green eyed, and vulgar
Into my solitude of dreams,
And after the fashion of your kind,
You bade me look
From out the rosy windows of my innocence.
Perhaps you, in your wise way,
Called me ignorant.
Then for awhile, for mine own ends,
I matched deceit with your deceit,
Until I know you tho't I lost my pose.
But I who walk the most in silence,
Speak as one who knows.

And when you tho't I was about to yield
My own pure body to your wanton ways,
In one swift moment, then I turned,
And caught, unmasked, the look
That serpents carry in their eyes.
And though you would not credit me with being wise,
Yet with a wisdom, new to me,
That matched your very own,
I lured that look
From its remoteness to the garish light,
And then I saw you,
Not as you seemed to be,
But as you are tonight.

SPRING

The new furrow'd field,
Tho'ts memories yield,
The pool in the vale down below.
The half-crazed mood
To search the near wood,
Where sap is beginning to flow.

We are never too old,
Nor emotion too cold
To thrill with the robin's first call,
Each blossom's a gem
We break from its stem,
No matter how slender or tall.

AN ALIEN'S LOVE

A pilgrim I am, on ways rough and uncouth,
A stranger far off from the dreams of my youth;
The longings that surge thro' my being today
Are for things I remember, but lost yesterday.
There's a lure to the past, and its charm ever clings,
My soul is a slave to the love of these things.

I can hear in my memory, in spring and in fall,
A sweet, welcome note of a robin's bright call;
It echoes across fields of clover and wheat,
Then dies faint away in a melody sweet.
And the sun, O! that sun when the day is new-born,
Dyeing the landscape all pink in the morn;
I gloat o'er each memory, I prize every tear,
Each little reminder, to me seems so dear.

A picture I have, in my memory hung,
Of a boundless, wide sky, in the twilight so young;
Pale, amethyst clouds 'gainst the pink and the blue,
Mistlike waifs flitting over this marvelous hue.
The path thro' the wildwood I knew it by heart,
Every twist, every turn I could find in the dark;
O! the charm of that landscape in memory clings,
Round the heart of an alien and tugs at its strings.

So true is the picture and bright thro' the mist,
Of a dear little cabin something like this;
With an old gabled roof, and small window panes,
All gladsomely dripping with spring's gentle rains.
An old-fashioned garden, ablaze as it were,
With old-fashioned blooms and the perfume they bear;
O! I am an alien, but the charm ever clings
'Round the old rusty gate, that creaks on its hinge.

I remember the hearth, oh! that hearth's amber gleams
Shines on the path of my maize tangled dreams;
And the lure of the home, what a world in one name,
And oh could I live it all over again.
Tho' time the old traitor has silvered my hair,
And aged my form 'neath burdens of care;
Thro' troubles and trials and sorrows I'll keep
In the soul of my being these memories sweet.

MY DIARY

Its early page is rapturous
With the transient dreams of youth,
So alive with expectations,
Sweet with faith and truth.
Here's a date of lost illusions,
Then a page of broken dreams,
When sorrow came, then friendship—
Spiced all with rosy gleams.

I turn a sweet rose-scented leaf,
And like a breath from June,
Love laughs at me between the lines,
Then mocks me with its doom.
A letter from a friend; and, in
My confidence reposed,
The history of her strange romance,
The wedding and the rose.

A day of happiness and mirth,
Spent somewhere by the sea;
The petals of crushed violets,
I cherish tenderly.
A birth, a death, a precious gift
From someone very dear,
Then jotted down at intervals
The things I hope and fear.

Then a war-drenched censored message
From the trenches oversea,
With the ghost of bygone laughter
Bubbling thro' it merrily.
Then a line of some old love song,
Too tender to forget,
And it tells me how I crooned it
'Till my foolish eyes were wet.

Each record, waking echoes,
Like a lonely cricket's chirr,
Wafting me back thro' aeons
To dreams and things that were.
Like hands from some mystic ocean
The past is calling me,
Thro' the medium of the pages
Of my gilt-edged diary.

GOING HOME

I keep wondering every summer,
When the western clouds hang low,
If the sky that I remember
Has the same infinite glow.
If the little sparrows nested
This summer in the comb,
And if the hummingbirds are singing
In the sharon tree back home.

And I wonder if the homestead
At the bottom of the hill,
Cuddles, as it used to seem to,
In the shadows soft and still.
If the gold of summer sunshine
And the silver of its rain
Sprinkles jewels in the morning
On each spotless window pane.

If the vines in charming tangles
Climbed away beyond the door.
Tonight the memory's sweeter
Than it's ever been before.
The years that once were rosy
Have taken on a soberer tone,
There's a something always with me
Weaving tender dreams of home.

NOVEMBER

Across the azure brightness
A slender sunlight rift;
In melancholy mood I watch
The solemn white clouds drift.
A crimson blaze is creeping
'Round the trunks of trees at times,
Each a willing pillar standing,
To support the failing vines.

Across the tender heart strings
A sudden shaft of pain,
Stirring leaves of old-time memories,
As the birds turn south again.
Rekindling burnt-out embers,
On life's hearthstone bare and cold,
Keeping warm the past Novembers,
Touched with amber rose and gold.

LIFE

It's the span between the cradle—
And the gap, we call the grave;
It's an epoch short and fleeting,
Where we labor, love and save.
It's the distance that we measure
By the moments, days and years;
And we pause amid its laughter
To wonder at our tears.

It's a bridge we all are building,
'Twi'x eternity and man,
And we find both truth and treason
Side by side on every span.
It's a school in which we squander
Energy and time and brain,
And we often meet disaster
Where we tho't to gather gain.

It's a rugged, twisted pathway,
Where the roses seldom grow;
And our songs are most of sorrow,
And our mirth turned into woe.
It's a gift we're not bestowing
On a relative or friend;
And, like riches, we can't take it
With us at the journey's end.

It's a season of existence,
Where we test our love and might;
It's the battleground of conscience,
Where we skirmish, march and fight.
It's a space where joy and sorrow
Finds the gateway to our lives,
And death's only a sweet stranger,
When the final day arrives.

MEMORY

It's the gallery where the artist
Hangs the picture of our life,
And he cares not if it's gloomy,
Or aglow with golden light.
It's a storehouse where we garner
And remember all the years
The things that gave us pleasure,
And the cause of all our tears.

It's the gateway to past sorrows,
And it always stands a-jar;
It's the key to future pleasure,
With the power to make or mar.
It's a diary where we've written
Every cherished item plain,
And each vivid, sacred, etching,
Stirs old memories and pain.

It's a little, cozy corner,
A tranquil, quiet abode,
A dream-filled space well hidden
From the highway and the road.
It's a voice that's never silent,
And a harp that's never still,
Waking echoes in our heart lobes
With each vibrant, trembling thrill.

It's a garden where we've planted,
And in after years we see
Each bud that bursts a petal,
Is a rose named memory.

MEMORY

Memory is the feeling,
That comes stealing, stealing, stealing
O'er your conscience, when you know you're stony broke
And you wish some occult dealings
Would paralyze your feelings,
When you hear your pardner tell his standard joke.

TO MY FRIEND

The hearth, a wide, wide room and me,
With that same old steadfast comrade, memory,
Beside me; bridging all too true
Life's, all aloneness, with sweet dreams of you.
A chair, a good book, and the answering flame,
The crackling hearth log, speaking back your name.
The old clock, marking off the hours in chimes,
That stir me from my reverie at times,
To drop me back as suddenly, into my dreams,
Sweeter than all the world's imaginings.

The hearth, a wide, wide room and me,
Making a vivid, bright reality
Of all the meaning nothing's running through
The strange, sweet personality of you;
The songs you sang that ended in a tear,
And your own sweet self so intimately near,
With all the golden, shimmering things you wore,
That I in my humility, had long forswore.
My unused nostrils scent tonight the fair
Sweet jasmine blossoms nestled in your hair.

'Tis midnight, and my soul's athirst
To hear your voice again quote verse on verse
Of classics that we studied, you and I,
In the lost, sunshiny days gone by.
O little, bursting, bleeding heart of fire,
Even your very faults I did admire;
I loved, adored, caressed and worshiped you,
You were so downright good, and absolutely true.
You, like a sparkling, bright sunbeam,
But my heart, always aching with a dream.

The hearth, a wide, wide room and my memory;
Dear little friend come back again and see
How soon I could forget most every loss,
And all the utter emptiness from crown to cross.
And all the burning tears I ever knew,
Just hearing the sweet, tinkling laugh of you;
Seeing your dimples chase from brow to chin,
Hearing your songs that had the teardrops in
And all your shimmering garments, golden sheen,
Would cure my heart of all its broken dreams.

MY ELYSIUM

Little brown house and solitude,
Friends and an amber hearth,
Tears, if I feel like crying,
Laughter, romance and mirth.

A wild, unconventional garden,
But fraught with a sweet repose,
Where creepers twine unchastened,
And the lily bends to the rose.

Little brown house and silence,
Unquestioned but understood,
Periods of noise and bustle
Thrilling its heart of wood.

The good-will of men and children,
Smiling and unafraid
To enter my charming elysium,
And play in its speckled shade.

Little brown house and solitude,
True friends, as I said before,
To sympathize, love, and believe me,
Though a heathen I am to the core.

TO DEATH

You've come, you've come, when least I thought you may
To claim at last this suffering, mortal clay.
At last, the horrid vision has come true,
How long I've feared, and how long hated you.
And how I fought you back long years a-gone,
When fiery fevers scorched and parched my tongue.
Then how I tried to laugh at my own fears,
But, lo; I tremble now, you're here, you're here.

You are the monster from which none can hide,
Your powerful presence cannot be denied.
You've hounded me these many, many years,
And mocked at all my sorrows, and my tears.
At last you've wrapped me in your clammy robes,
And laid your icy hand on my heart lobes.
You tramp where no one else has ever trod.
At last: I am your victim and O God!
Teach me how to die, forgive all sin,
This is your vengeance, death, you win, you win.

HELLO, APRIL

Hello, April, is it you?

Faith we know your smiles and sighs,
With the teardrops tricklin' thro'
Ever-changing clouds and skies,
Teasing us with sun, then rain,
But we love you, just the same.

The soft rustling of your skirt
Has a magic touch I we'en,
And the essence of your breath
Turns the hillside grass all green.
Spring's first lilting, quivering note,
Comes from out your teary throat.

Irish April, with your smile,
Southland's wind and songbirds come,
Braving winter's lingering chill,
But believing in your sun.
Hello, April, how-de-do!
My, we're glad to know it's you.

THE ONE I LOVE

I loved a man, a little man,
But he was not for me;
He was only two years old,
When I was twenty-three.
His cheeks like velvet to my touch,
They held youth's flag unfurled,
I so admired the lovely way
His silken locks were curled.

I loved a man, I love him still,
He's stalwart, twenty-three,
His lips are firm, but yet they press
Each other tenderly.
His cheek is tanned a leafy brown,
And in his grey blue eyes
A look so keen, so brave, and true,
Like shafts from summer skies.

I knew he was not mine to keep,
He's dressed in brown Khaki,
And I'm wishing back the years,
When I was twenty-three.

NEWS FROM THE STREET

You'll be dyin' to hear of your rival, my dear,
Mag Allen, that little coquette,
She's flirted outrageous, with ALL uv the bys,
And niver got wan uv thim yit.
Kathleen Oleary's still single, sweet girl,
An angel, as ivery wan knows,
With the eyes uv her lookin' like rapture from hiven,
And her face like a sweet smellin' rose.

You'll be wild that I'm shure as I would be mesilf
To hear all you can hear of Barney.
I'm sorry to till you he's fightin' in France,
Like the rist uv the bys from Killarney.
Now don't let me think that your fast fallin' tears
Will spoil this foine litter oi sind,
I needn't have tould you such news, darlin' girl
But my nature could niver pretind.

Mrs. Mahoney has gotten some twins,
Michael O'keaf hit the trail,
I maine that he's under the shamrocks, my dear,
And his widow is turribly frail.
But I'll give you the truth from a real Irish heart,
Tak' their blunders and blarney and all,
I'd sooner love all uv thim only a bit,
Thin a few uv thim niver at all.

This island is green as the sea, that it is,
And just like a dream gift from God
Is the dear little shamrock that angel-kissed bloom
O, how oi love the auld sod.
We're not a bad sort, you have left here behind,
You see I'm the blarney itsilf,
But I'm true to the home uv me father's and yours,
And oim sindin' me love to yoursilf.

THE LOOMS THAT WOVE THE KHAKI

It is hung beneath the emblem,
With the white and crimson bars,
And the blue-flecked eyes look courage
From the shadow of the stars.
It's a picture of a soldier,
Just a noble Yankee son,
And the looms that wove the Khaki,
And the crimson bars are one.

All the things he cannot tell us,
All the dangers that menace
Are all written like a story,
On his wistful, homesick face.
A soldier to the last he'll be,
Till the dreadful war is done,
For the looms that wove the Khaki,
And the crimson bars are one.

O soldier, it's your picture
Hung beneath the crimson bars,
You are fighting for our safety,
While we walk beneath the stars.
We will cherish, love and laud it,
To our children's children's sons,
For the looms that wove the Khaki,
And the stars and stripes are one.

CONTENT

I'm interested in all the news, although
I do not even see the passing show;
I only sit at home in my porch swing,
And have the neighbors tell me everything.
I do not need to see the baseball game,
Then come home tired, disgusted, limp and lame.
I do not need to cross the sun-hot street
And rave at every step my aching feet.
I sit at home and read the news, that's all;
But know the ins and outs of Cobb's baseball.
I know, although I was not there to see,
How some yelled punk, and others said "tee, tee."
The bum play, and the bleachers, "he's a frost,"
Crestfallen faces when Detroit lost
I followed once the heels of every crowd,
And heard the praises linger long and loud;
But now I sit at home, and tranquilly I choose,
To save the leather in my new black shoes.

THE ROAD'S END

In night's sweet gloom I fall asleep,
Brain-weary and heartsore,
And seek in dreams the rest I crave
From turmoil and life's war.
Unconscious of all care and strife,
At the day's sweet, tender close,
Then memory mingles in my dreams,
The dewdrop and the rose.

Abrupt I'll find the sweet road's end,
With strife and care all past,
And tired and weary of the road,
I seek the gloom at last.
That little space so fraught with peace,
At the day's sweet, tender, close
Then mingled on my pulseless breast,
Death's myrtle and life's rose.

THE MOVING VAN

There's a mirrorless mirror,
A pictureless frame,
And the dining-room table
Does not look just the same.
The sugar and butter,
We frantically hope
Is not fatally mixed
With dutch cleanser and soap.
The treasures we value,
And fearful to lose,
Are found in a muddle,
With blacking and shoes.

Our good Sunday bonnet,
Where the skillet should be,
The drapery and muslins
Smell of Salada tea.
Our fine underclothing
And good suit of clothes
Are faintly perfumed
With mustard and cloves.
Describe all the horrors,
O, I never can,
That falls in the wake
Of the old moving van.

HER DREAM

Mary Martha Liza Brooks
Had a hunch she'd write a book
While the youthful years were slipping o'er her head,
But she followed custom's rule,
And when she was out of school,
Being very poor, she could do naught but wed.
Then she settled down for life,
She was mother, seamstress, wife,
But all the while she kept that dream back in her brain,
Through the years of care and work
She was game, she didn't shirk,
But the dream kept living, lurid, just the same.

Then when she was turning gray,
All her children went away,
For some of them had babies and a home.
She had time to rest and think,
Then that dream intact, distinct,
Domineered, distracted, claimed her for its own.
So Mary Martha Liza Brooks
Wrote a startling, taking book,
It became the craze of half the reading world,
And all the folks who'd turned her down,
Gossipped all around the town,
Said they knew Eliza when she was a girl.

When you're feeling old and blue,
Keep your dreams all sweet and true,
Never let the uncouth task put out the flame,
And some day 'tho others sneer,
You'll get the vision straight and clear,
And realize that dream back in your brain.

HIS DISSECTION

When God made me,
It seemed, O gee,
He tho't 'twas not enough,
But sprinkled lots
Of perfumed tho'ts
Among my brainy stuff.

I wish, instead,
He'd merely said,
No dreams or visions hazy,
But as it is
O well, gee whiz,
I'm nearly going crazy.

A DREAM

A dear little dream came tripping
Into my life one day,
Crowning the hours with a halo,
And perfumed them with the rose o' May.
And O how I coddled and loved it,
I worshipped it night and day,
I hugged it, embraced, and caressed it,
And pleaded with it to stay.

But on the dawn of a cold, grey morning,
When I especially felt forlorn,
I found it and O it was broken,
And shattered, and bruised, and torn.

But still I know I shall keep it
And always remember the day
When I loved it, embraced and caressed it,
Sweet dream of the rose o' May.

LITTLE GIRL

I'm not fit for this office I'm holding,
In mothering you, little girl,
As your features I'm ever adoring,
Kissing each braid and curl.

Such motherly nonsense you waken
Way down in the soul of me,
The things that I missed, longed for and loved,
I'm beholding them all in thee.

O could I keep you ever
Beside me with braid and curl,
No shade of shame in your wide, young eyes,
Mine own, own, dear little girl.

But God seems to will things different,
And after awhile you'll go,
Like the rest to have your sorrows,
And loves and cares and woe.

For each life has its own experience,
Each soul its mute misery,
You'll suffer, I know, in your grief alone,
In your own Gethsemane.

TAKE IT FROM ME

I get sick of washing dishes,
Mornin', night and noon,
Tired o' sweepin' cobwebs,
With a feministic broom.

Sick o' polishin' o' floorboards,
Where there ain't no carpets laid,
Tired o' makin' shiny tumblers
Stand like soldiers on parade.

Sick o' make belevin' muffins
Is a pot o' pork and beans,
Sick o' green tea masqueradin'
Without granulated cream.

Such things spoil my little meter,
Detract glory from the rhyme;
Shure, it ain't no celebration
Makin' water taste like wine.

Conservation gets me nowhere,
Only hoovering jam,
Plague take the brooms and brushes,
I wish I were a man.

Then I'd sure go over yonder
In the middle of the fuss
And wallop him that's makin'
Such a darn fool out of us.

A REQUEST

You've asked me to write a few verses;
I'm trying to grant the desire;
But the strains that I love best are broken,
So this rhyme will be lacking in fire.

Is it strange you think me dejected?
For the furrows you see on my brow
Are but tokens of useless endeavor,
To be what I'll never be now.

My beautiful dreams have all perished,
My ambitions were never fulfilled;
I would that my heart and emotions
Were dead as my dreams and as still.

NOW AND THEN

Back across the vanished years
That I'll never see again
Is a field of purple violets
Where I wander now and then.
Brighter than my vision keen,
Sweeter than my sweetest dream
Is the memory of that shady, purple glen.

There's a cottage in a country
Where the dream-folk keep their dreams,
It is bathed in mellow sunlight,
Lacy shadows fleck its beams.
And since I'm turning grey,
Oftentimes I look away
To that country where the leaves are always green.

There's a lane all maple shaded,
And a limpid, speckled pool;
Where white, starry, daisies nestled,
Much more tempting than my school.
And in memory's corridor,
Where I keep my treasured store,
Hangs the picture of that shady nook so cool.

So oftentimes I fain would wander
In the field and shady glen,
And I'm yearning for the cottage
And the maple speckled lane.
And tho' I'm turning grey,
I've the same old dream each day,
Just to pick those purple violets now and then.

A REPLY TO A GIFT

In remembrance of the happy days
Was written on the card,
More and many happy new years
Is the wish I'm wishing hard.

Touched to the core and speechless
From the thoughts that filled my brain,
And in fancy I turned backward
To that friendship once again.

And I clasped their hands in memory
Across the years of time,
Truly friendship lives forever,
Defying age, and wealth, and clime.

GOING BACK

Sometime, some day, I'm going back
Across the span of years,
And reason out the mystery
Of all my sighs and tears.
I'll see the little hidden path,
The road I could not find,
Tho' faithfully, I searched, and searched,
Midst hope and tears half-blind.

The kindnesses I'll understand,
Meant only for my good,
The actions, back of all the things
I so misunderstood.
And how I chose the wrong way out,
With grewsome doubts and fears,
Then lost myself in all this maze
Of brooding, bitter years.

And how I longed so for the light,
I had no peace or rest,
And why the bridge I needless crossed
I'll know then what is best.
I'll ford the restless, turbulent stream,
That crossed the beaten track,
I'll finish out my broken dream
Sometime when I go back.

MY SWEETHEART

Across the border land of mystic sleep
I take the vivid picture of her face;
The daylight memories, the sweetnesses of her,
Are with my sleeping fancies interlaced.
Black eyes, like moonlight paths in dreams,
Though love drunken, I still drink their magic mist,
And claim the charms that make life worth the cost,
Lips meant only for mine own to kiss.

I whisper to myself, Florenza, that's her name,
Each letter in itself a joy complete;
With concious pride I link them with my own,
And wonder why they sound so strangely sweet.
Life has no charm if mine she may not be—
First, sweetest, last, and only girl for me.

ONE FRIEND

A friend like him, I'll never find,
He knew each mood that turned my mind.
We did not need to speak, we understood,
Without the aid of utterance, each word,
That friends in confidence are apt to speak,
He's dead; the tears flow down my cheek,
My sorrow weighs me like a log,
He was a true friend, my old dog.

NEW YEAR'S MEMOIRS

We have pictures in our memories
From the well-remembered years,
And the vision grows the brighter
When we glimpse it thro' our tears.
There's a circle of bright faces,
Rosy in the firelight's glow,
Each one happy and contented,
That was New Year's, long ago.

Then the world all tempting, smiling,
Beckoned to them, one and all,
And with dreamy face they listened
To that never-ending call.
So time robbed the pleasant household
And the hearth is bare and cold;
True 'twill never be re-kindled,
As it was in days of old.

Some have tasted triumph's sweetness,
Some are happy, some are fair,
Some are comrades of disaster,
Some companions to despair.
For the battle-cry lured many,
And the trench holds some tonight,
Who will know no more tomorrows,
Never more be called to fight.

Some have gathered gold a-plenty
From the world's rich boundless store,
Some have traveled far, and maybe,
They'll be strangers evermore.
Some have crossed the one dark river,
And will never more be seen
Till the trumpet of the Master
Wakes us all from our last dream.

TO ONE IN HEAVEN

After you died, I could not bring myself to see
That I must kiss the cross and bear it patiently,
That I must still go on, and pulse with life and breath,
While you have met the great adventure, death.
And when I kissed you through my falling tears,
I tho't of all your busy, careworn years,
Of all the bitter pain, my loss, and then of this,
Perhaps e'en now you feel the heavenly kiss
Of balmy breezes in that distant bourne,
From which no mortal ever did return.
Perhaps your robes are made of lovely things
Beyond the power of my imaginings,
And in that heaven we've pictured up above,
I hope God gives you all the things you love.
I hope the angels welcome freely given
On this, your premature return to heaven.

AS A WOMAN SEES IT

War is paid for with our money,
And twice overpaid in pain,
And in years of anxious waiting,
While the teardrops fall like rain.
While a few have gained the prestige
And the power they long wished for,
Unmindful of the sorrow
In the little house next door.

O, we're true and love our country,
But we would not have it marred;
We gloat o'er every emblem,
Blue crowned and crimsoned barred
But we see past all the glory,
Where waiting hearts are sore,
Facing cheerless, sad tomorrows,
In a little house next door.

War is paid for by our husbands,
By the blood of precious sons,
But it's only hell, no matter
What's been paid or said or done.
And the few will have all glory,
And love's greeting after war,
But there'll be no such tomorrows
In some little house next door.
(On the spur of the moment.)

THE GOBBLER'S LAMENT

Yesterday an egg I was,
Today a turkey fat,
I face the chopping block with no
White feather in my hat.

My supple limbs are rudely tied,
I'm cast in the woodshed,
With tho'ts of what a feast I'll be
For someone when I'm dead.

So I'll be butchered in my prime,
It is, alas, my fate,
No nobler cause but just to give
Some kid the stomachache.

Woe is me my plumage, too,
That proudly I displayed,
Will make a pillow for the couch,
A duster for the maid.

It is, alack, a tragic fate,
The end I sadly greet,
Abandoned in my last, lone hours,
With fetters on my feet.

The snowy linen has no charms,
But this my latest breath,
A gobbler I have been in life,
Will gobbled be in death.

AMERICA

A matchless, broad horizon,
Abundant, healthful soil,
Yielding the farmer's treasure
And nature's pay for toil.
Serene, majestic mountains,
Cool streams sparkling down,
Set in the landscape's bosom
Like jewels in a crown.
It's a lover's love I give you,
Home of the goldenrod,
To the foreign its protection,
To me it's home and God.

EXTEMPORANEOUS

My friends have all been asking,
In a manner most polite,
If I get any money?
For the dope I often write.
Or if I get any laurels,
Or a boost along towards fame,
Does anybody praise me
And does anybody blame?

I can't answer all these questions,
In a satisfactory way,
For the other fellow's saying
The same things I want to say.
But I don't get any laurels
For my literary dope,
Nobody ever paid me
For a blooming thing I've "wrote."

I've written praise of Dr. S.,
I've roasted real estate,
I've boosted times and ledgers
At a ripping, speedy rate,
Nobody ever thanked me,
Nobody ever blames,
But I keep on writing verses
And they print them just the same.

I will never be a millionaire
Or buy a little home
With the money I am getting;
There's no laurels on my dome.
I don't give a continental
What the critics have to say,
They may give me blame or censor,
I will go my own, sweet way.

They may give me blame or censor,
Maybe lemons or soft soap;
They may rave and tear their whiskers
When they read this awful dope.
I (shud worry) for their laurels,
Or their lemons, or their praise,
I'll get what's coming to me
At the parting of the ways.

Then, with hands serenely folded,
I don't know but yet they might
Put laurels on my forehead
When I can no longer write.

OH MEMORIES DEAR

My heart calls over the wide, bridgeless span,
And I'm longing each day for a clasp of your hand;
My soul is a crater of burning old pain,
Come over the wreckage and woe me again,
 Oh memories sweet.

The robins are calling, oh can you not hear
Or see from your dreamport my fast falling tear?
The future is dark and my youth it has fled,
And I, save for anguish, am pulseless and dead,
 Oh memories dear.

Come over the crumbled vast waste of my dreams,
I'm reaching my willing hands over the stream;
I'm loving you still with each thought of my brain,
Come over the wreckage and woe me again,
 Oh memories dear.

The myrtle and ivy are green on your grave,
In the cold years I try to be cheerful and brave;
Your features before me forever I'll keep,
'Till I rest by your side in that long, dreamless sleep.
 Oh memories dear.

TO A WOULD-BE HUSBAND

If she dresses to please you do not look past her,
Do not miss the lovelight lurking in the blue,
Don't forget to praise her for her dimples,
For I know she'll do the same dear things for you.

If the day's been long and cold and full of trouble,
Perhaps it's been the same with her at home.
Do not turn her sunny June into December,
Life's too short and many of us go alone.

If she's listless, tired, perhaps she's just love hungry,
If from her cheeks the roses fade away,
Do not forget the charms that used to lure you,
And the dear old tender things you used to say.

You've a right to smile as well as she of evenings,
She'll play up, I know, if you will do your part.
On this voyage that you're taking, son, remember,
Life's too short to carry with us broken hearts.

HOMESICK HEART

Oh, I mus' go home agen,
I kan't sing or work or sleep,
Eventime it's jest the same,
No ambition in my feet;
Nev'ah knowin' what I do,
Tho'ts keep driffen' back to you.

Homesick, wall I 'spose I is,
Sick enough I know it sho',
For the welcome that I knows
Jest inside my cabin do',
And the tooten' of a train
Mak's me wild fo' home agen.

The's a big lump in ma throat,
And a tuggin' at ma hea't,
And a-feelin' I kan't shake
Mak's my eyelids sting and sma't;
Voices thro' the fallin' rain,
Callin' me back home again.

Tho'ts of how the April rain
Mak's the home flowers sweet to pick
Keep a'troopin' thro' my brain,
That's anothah lonesome trick;
And every time ah hears a train
Ah wants to go back home again.

OCTOBER

How can I write a fitting verse
To hazy brown October?
When there's so very many things
To make me sane and sober?

The maple leaves are turning gold,
Virginia creeper crimson,
Amber tints across the field,
Bewildering and winsome.

The war might be in Amsterdam,
In Norwalk, or New Haven,
I'm still delighted with the way
Sweet nature's been behaving.

THE ROAD HOME

(In October)

The road might be enchanting
With a blaze of rose and gold,
And rich, ripe, tints of crimson
Like dream things never told.
Then in unexpected places,
At the rivers sudden bend,
You're restless, and so eager,
For the greeting at the end.

Lonely places waiting,
Like harps with untuned strings,
Silence and solitude,
Where only hearts can sing.
But above it all emotion,
Like thought transmission sends
Just a hint of half the pleasure
In the greeting at the end.

There's a rift of autumn sunlight,
And dry leaves rustling,
The upland's blue horizon,
And the wild geese on the wing.
Then there's warm hearts, kind and tender,
With the words so quick to send,
All the looked-for joy and comfort,
Through the greeting at the end.

SYMPATHY

Thou medium through which another
Seems to feel and know and see,
That another soul may languish,
For that strange thing, sympathy.

Human hearts lie silent waiting,
Like the viol or the lute,
For a touch or some vibration
To stir the strings so strangely mute.

Human souls are all so woven
With the web of destiny,
That they thrill and vibrate, even,
At the thought of sympathy.

HIS LAST VERSE

A scribbler with ambition
Wrote some charming verse,
Some verses were inspiring,
Some could not be worse.
So the editors all canned him,
Shipped him back his charming dope,
Then in tears and desperation
These lines he sadly wrote :

“My pen is badly blunted,
I’ve ‘wrote’ verse by the score,
I ‘wrote’ about a thousand,
Then again I ‘wrote’ some more.
I’ve used a lot of paper,
And postage stamps as well,
And you never even thanked me
Nor said my lines were swell.

I do not mean to give offense,
But I think you’re mighty rude ;
I could cuss a blooming streak
For your base ingratitude.
If the printer’s devil gets this
And puts it on the shelf,
Have mercy on the author,
For he has none for himself.”

CONSOLATION

Honey, though the winter
Has everything froze up,
Let’s think about the violets
And the fragrant lilycups.

The long ferns, dank and slender,
And the buds that burst their bloom,
Let’s forget the ice of winter
In the joys of early June.

And how the warm sun welcomes
Mr. Robin on the wing,
And the sweet crabapple blossoms
Are all coaxing him to sing.

DESERTED

(Written by Request)

From the depths of despair where you left me,
To the merciless level of scorn,
Then to moments of torture and anguish,
That rack me and leave me forlorn.
Through night's pitiless darkness not sleeping,
Unable to rest the night through,
Still finding myself not believing
The unexplained actions of you.

Ofttimes my own memory appals me,
Tricks me into thinking of you,
And I find myself foolishly dreaming
Sweet dreams that will never come true.
The perfume of roses come stealing
From out of the garden like wine,
But this heart knows no youth, it is breaking,
And marks not the passing of time.

God, how can I go on? I'm just human,
And how bear the rack and the pain?
Instead of a throne where sits reason,
I've a place of torment for a brain.
There's moments of madness that seize me,
And I ponder life's peaceful decline,
And I wonder if death in his keeping
Keeps sorrows and will he keep mine.

LOVE SONG

Walking in gardens
And thinking of you,
Seeing the starlight
The long night through ;
Not sensing the daybreak,
Benumbed by the pain
Of hours spent in longing
To see you again.

Hearing of voices,
Each one like your own,
Your features in visions
Like dreams never known.
The days all unnumbered,
Night time is vain
When I am so longing
To see you again.

THE GAME OF LIFE

I keep thinking each day that I'm living,
And half the dark, lonely night,
Of the problems that often perplex us,
And the heartrending sorrows that vex us,
In the wearisome game we call life.

I arise on the bright, dewy morning,
With my plans all so cheerfully laid,
Then a cloud unforeseen has arisen
And dimmed the bright path of my vision,
And I'm suddenly cold and afraid.

My hopes are all bright in the morning,
Contented I feel with my lot,
But before the noon hour and the evening
I'm with troubles possessed and believing,
Life's useless and God has forgot.

So it is with us all in life's morning,
With faith in the future and trust,
But at noontime our dreams are not master,
And we're facing misfortune's disaster,
And the picture of dreams in the dust.

MARRIAGE

Whether it's heaven,
Or whether it's hell,
Or whether it's in between ;
Whether it's oodles of joyous bliss,
Or a broken, shattered dream,
It may be neutrality, war or peace,
A story too sweet to tell,
The word may stand for a world of things,
Whether it's heaven or hell.

FRIENDS

For the falseness of our comrades,
Time never makes amends,
Save when we stop to ponder
The loveliness of friends.

GOODBYES

Once I had a little playmate
In the dear days long ago,
We always were together,
For we loved each other so.
One day she came and kissed me,
With the teardrops in her eye,
Then in my little notebook
I wrote my first good-bye.

Then pure, sweet love came swiftly
Into my life one day,
And for awhile my happiness
Was sweet as life's young May.
He kissed my lips and forehead,
We parted with a sigh
And I thought my heart was breaking
When I wrote good-bye, good-bye.

I wrote good-bye in sorrow
To the dearest little chum ;
I and my schoolmates wrote it
When our parting days had come.
Then to sisters, and my brothers,
And to the old folks, oh the pain
I suffered when we parted,
And I wrote good-bye again.

Then on my marriage morning,
When I became a wife,
I wrote farewell forever
To my single, care-free life.
I faced the future bravely,
Without a tear or sigh,
Quite cheerfully across the page
Three times I wrote good-bye.

I've said good-bye in sunshine,
I have called it through the rain,
I have heard it said with laughter,
And sobbed through lips of pain.
Perhaps when death comes creeping,
To dim my brightening eye,
I'll stay his clammy hand, until
I write my last good-bye.

COME BACK AGAIN

(Dedicated to My Friends)

Christmas day seems glorious,
With its wealth of gift and cheer,
But the thing that makes it lovely,
Is a true friend somewhere near.
And they're wishing you more New Year's,
And you're wishing them the same,
And when evening shadows part you,
You invite them back again.

The sunshine seems the brighter
For their added bit of cheer,
And our burdens seem the lighter,
When their sunny face is near.
And you say, come back tomorrow;
Come back, and back again,
You cannot come too often,
Or stay too long, my friend.

Oh how we strew the blossoms
Above our precious dead,
And leave heartbreaks unmended,
And the tender things unsaid.
In life one's time is precious,
But 'twould ease an ache or pain
If we'd whisper, genuinely,
When I'm lonely, come again.

So when your summing up my failings
And my faults, oh tenderly—
Remember, your the pattern
Of the friend I'd like to be.
Though my failings cause you sorrow,
And my blunders give you pain,
Forgive me, oh, forgive me,
And be sure and come again.

Your friend,

Jeannette Henshall.

EARLIER POEMS

TAKE ME BACK

(Written When a Child)

Take me back, oh mother do,
Where my boy friends were true blue,
Where I had my little bedroom way up stairs,
Where a dozen boys or more,
Came to play at our back door,
Tho' we tracked in snow, it seemed you didn't care.

We used to have a blazing hearth,
And our home was filled with mirth;
Oh, I hate this living in a measly flat!
And it seems, my mother dear,
When you moved us all out here,
That you shipped your loving family off the map.

Oh, at night I cannot sleep,
Though I count a million sheep,
I'm so lonesome, I could dig myself a grave.
Dear ma, have a heart for me,
You only say real cross to me,
"You better hush your crying and behave."

I'm so lonesome, take me back
To my little playmate Jack.
Can't you see that I must play just all alone,
I don't like it here at all,
And before the robins call
I'll pack my little grip and go back home.

THE OLD GARRET

In the dark and dim old garret,
Beneath the slanting roof,
There's a tale told in a moment,
Quite enough to fill a book.
Oh what thoughts I weave in fancy
And my tears they flow in vain,
My sadness is re-echoed
By the falling of the rain.

In the far-off tiny corner,
Dusty and begrimed with age,
Stands a desk once used by children,
On its shelf a blotted page.
I turn my face to hide a teardrop,
And my heart nigh breaks with pain,
As I listen to the falling
Of the gentle, springtime rain.

Esther's little dolls and playthings,
Jimmie's engine on the floor,
Two pairs of wee worn booties,
Either side the crumbling door.
In fancy I can see them
And hear their voice again,
While the raindrops make me music
On the garret window pain.

I see two little figures
Pleading for a goodnight kiss,
And in fancy I embrace them,
In their innocence and bliss.
But they've gone away forever,
Advancing years have played the game,
And my eyes are filled with tears
As I listen to the rain.

But in spite of tears I smiled
At the pictures on the wall,
That childish hands had painted,
Dearer these to me than all.
So the garret told its story,
And my heart is racked with pain,
Thus I fall asleep, listening
To the patter of the rain.

A SAD TEA TIME

I was awful sorry,
When as ma says, "brother wed,"
It doesn't seem like home at all,
I'd just as soon be dead.
But he got the nicest kind of wife,
She's as sweet as she can be,
The only time it seems like home
Is when they come to tea.

Ma makes the nicest kind of cake,
With cocoanut on top,
She has plum pies and puddin',
And taters steaming hot.
Then after that around the fire
Big brother sings to me,
So I have the "bestes" kind of fun
When they both come to tea.

But when he goes away again
It makes me feel so bad,
And I wonder who will be the next
To make ma's heart feel sad.
She smiles a funny kind of smile
And says it might be me,
I couldn't think of such a thing,
Could you? "Why, Jiminee!"

Father's hair is getting white,
Mother's growing thin,
Sometimes I see the teardrops
Start, and drop off from her chin.
There used to be whole six of us,
But now there's only three,
The vacant place makes me feel blue
When we gather round to tea.

Could you think of me away from home,
Away, away far off,
Away from my dear pa and ma,
Where everything is rough.
No, I've decided here and now,
That I will always be
Right close to my own pa and ma
And always home for tea.

NIGHTMARE

We rush through the night o'er an unthought-of road,
We can fly like a bird and hop like a toad,
We could have oogles and oogles and oogles of fun,
But our clothes all come off and we never can run.
The troubles we have are heap, much, galore,
For we're bare as a bird in some grocery store.

We go chasin' around in this fool of a dream,
A dear little sweetheart all peaches and cream,
'Till quick as a flash, oh much quicker than that,
She turns into a dude with a pink lace cravat;
To our horror we're left by someone in the lurch,
Dressed just in pajamas inside of the church.

Feeling less than a penny, we're awfully sore,
While trying to find an impossible door.
At last we're released by a strange little elf,
Stranger than ever, dressed just like ourselves;
We ride on the moon through oceans of blue,
In spite of apparel we're enjoying it, too.

In a minute we fall to the earth like a stone,
Then ponder another mad flight through the zone.
We land in "Paree" with servants so sleek,
And live to the tune of a million a week.
Then biff, in a jiffy we're struck on the bean,
Awakened at last from that nightmarish dream.

HAPPY MOLLY

Happy Molly had a smile
For everyone she met,
Happy Molly was some "baby,"
You can surely "bet."
Molly also was a winner
Everywhere she went,
But she married a mean sinner
Without pa's consent.

Happy Molly was not happy
After she was wed,
And I know that she'd much
"Rawther" have been dead.
Troubles followed Molly's marriage,
About nine, or maybe ten,
Neighbors vied with one another
That she'd never smile again.

After many years of trouble
And accumulated fat,
Which made poor, tortured Molly,
Look like the U. S. map.
This ends my tragic story,
Everything's been said,
Wipe the tear from your left glimmer,
Happy Molly's dead.

WISHES

I wish I could have a dear little dream,
That nobody else could smash ;
I wish I could build a castle,
That wouldn't come down with a crash.
Wish I had a dollar that wouldn't be spent,
And a rose that would not fade away ;
I wish that life's winter were sweeter by far
Than the sunshine and blossoms of May.

Wish I had a laugh that knew when to laugh,
And a tear when it ought to be shed ;
The right thing to say for the good and the bad,
The same for the living and dead.
I wish for a friend who would always be true,
For a hand to help those who are down ;
I wish my illusions, ideals and dreams,
Refused to be faded and brown.

Wish I always had a kind word for the old,
The same for the frolicking young ;
In moments of sorrow, temptations and pride,
For a bridle to put on my tongue.
Indeed, if these wishes were granted to me,
And to the rest of the world, one and all,
Faith! we'd have little need of the Bible or Christ,
And we wouldn't need heaven at all.

THE ANGEL'S MISSION

An angel had a mission
On the frost-white world below,
So left the gates of heaven
Through swirling clouds of snow.

On a dark street all forsaken
Was a poor child in despair,
Kneeling in the frost and cold
She breathed this tiny prayer.

For just one friend, the angel heard,
And very strangely smiled
At such an ancient, timeworn prayer,
From such a little child.

The angel touched the child's cold face,
And straightway dried each tear,
The child a-wondering at the face
So marvelously dear.

No more the little child was cold,
No longer left alone,
That countenance that was so dear
Was but the Lord Christ's own.

SINCE MAMMA'S GONE AWAY

Everything's as dark and black,
Just as dark as night,
Since they took mamma way from me,
Way from out my sight.

And it's oh, so dark and cold,
Even through the day,
There isn't any fun at all
Since mamma's gone away.

There's no one now to smooth my hair
And pat my burning cheek,
To tuck me up at night in bed,
Or cover up my feet.

There's no one now to laugh and talk,
And do like mamma did,
She's gone to heaven to live up there,
That is what the preacher said.

But everything is covered round
With sadness and with gloom,
They didn't promise me at all
That I'd see mamma soon.

The thing that puzzles me the most
And I would like to know,
How she can stay away so long
From me, her only boy.

What folks say about you doesn't matter,
What they're thinking only matters less
But when the clover waves above you,
To a friend who truly loves you,
You're like a sweet remembered dream of happiness.

LEST WE FORGET

When life is all December
And the lowering clouds of fate
Seem to turn your humble pathway
Into storm and dread and hate;
When the daily path is dripping
With the cold rains of despair,
And there's not a cheering glimmer
'Round the debris anywhere;
When you long for understanding
And a handclasp warm and true,
It's as well that you remember,
Such luxuries are few.

When the future is not tempting
And the past is just as grey
And the end of all your troubles
Seems a weary age away;
When the friendship that you long for
And the smile you often crave
Have no deeper, subtle meaning,
And the world is cold and grave;
When you're looking for a something
That will thrill you through and through
It's as well that you remember
Such luxuries are few.

BLESS THE BOY

(To Mr. Cowen)

I wish, dear sir, to beg of you
To please grant me the pleasure,
In writing just a line or two,
Bid welcome to your treasure.

Many may rejoice with you,
May nothing mar your joy,
I for one doth plead of heaven
A blessing for your boy.

Pure and innocent, sweet and fair,
Spotless, costly, priceless gem,
Dropped as a star from yonder heaven
Among the ways of men.

The path for him may rugged be,
It may be dreary, rough and wild,
Whatever may be in the plan,
May heaven protect the child.



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